

MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
EDINA HUMAN RIGHTS & RELATIONS COMMISSION
April 23, 2013
7:00 PM

I. *CALL TO ORDER*

Chair Bigbee called the meeting to order at 6:55 PM.

II. *ROLLCALL*

Answering roll call were Commissioners Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton, Winnick, Chair Bigbee and Student Member Stang. Staff present: Lisa Schaefer, Staff Liaison and Ari Klugman, City Manager Intern.

III. *MEETING AGENDA APPROVED*

Motion was made by Commissioner Stanton to approve the meeting agenda of the April 23, 2013 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kingston.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick.
Motion carried.

IV. *CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTED*

A. March 19, 2013 Minutes

B. Community Outreach Work Group and Press Release.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cashmore and seconded by Commissioner Seidman to approve the consent agenda.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick.
Motion carried.

V. *COMMUNITY COMMENT*

Lisa Finsness, addressed the Human Rights and Relations Commission regarding the removal of a Human Rights and Relations Commission Member.

Finsness stated on February 5, 2013 a member was removed by the City Council, as a result of a complaint. She stated that the HRRC's role is to value human rights, which involves the right to participate in government and respect its community.

- Concern was expressed about the removal by the Council allegedly without due process, due diligence or fact finding. Finsness was also concerned about the bylaws of the HRRC not honoring article 10 of the United Nations' International Declaration for Human Rights.
- Finsness suggested correcting the wrong by having a conversation with the person affected by this complaint and amending the bylaws to require due process.

Commissioner Kingston stated she did not feel that Finsness' statement was an accurate depiction of the situation, the actions of the City Council or the role of this Commission.

Chair Bigbee reminded the Commission that although Commission Members may be asked to sit in interviews, the appointment or removal of individuals from the Commission is done by the City Council.

VI. *REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

A. Plan a joint Work Session with Council

Chair Bigbee reminded the Commission the joint work session will be held from 5:30-7 pm on Tuesday May 7, 2013.

Commissioner Kingston reminded the Commission the structure of past work sessions. Last time, they highlighted the key accomplishments of the previous year and each group presented what they are working on. There is a specific item on the agenda related to the Domestic Partnership Ordinance that has been tabled to be discussed at the work session with Council.

Commissioner Stanton asked to discuss whether the Commission wants to bring forward the Domestic Partner Ordinance Revisions. He has two concerns, 1) next week the legislature will vote on legalizing same-sex marriage, which could render the ordinance redundant; 2) In July the Supreme Court will rule on DOMA, which may have a lot of impacts related to benefits. Since it is in a state of flux and some of the ordinance itself is out of date, a lot has changed since 2010.

Commissioner Stanton made a motion to revisit in July, and ask the Council for their input on what is being suggested.

There was not a second, motion failed.

Commissioner Cashmore pointed out that DOMA will not affect businesses smaller than 50 employees, so it would not accomplish the goal of the revision.

Commissioner Winnick explained even if marriage was legalized in Minnesota, the City does business with others outside the state. All this provision does is allow the City to give preference to a company that provides benefits for domestic partners. If this is the approach we take, the next level of discussion is whether or not it should be exact or substantially similar.

Commissioner Cashmore explained they put in exact because Council Member Brindle had concerns about justifying paying more because someone offers domestic partnerships. We wanted to give the City the out. The goal is for this to serve symbolically, as a gesture of support for companies who offer benefits to domestic partners.

Chair Bigbee asked to put together a presentation which review of our previous years' experience and highlights the new ideas and initiatives the Commission has. The presentation will include: Anti-Bullying- Edina Reads, Tom Oye Award, adding Gender Expression to the City Ordinance, Opposition to the Marriage Amendment, Opposition to the Voter ID Amendment, Domestic Partner Registry, Conflict Free Materials, Days of Remembrance, Religious Observance Policy, Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals, Bias/Hate Crime Response Plan, Super PACs (even though it was tabled by Council).

Commissioner Lagerstrom proposed an additional anti-bullying event for 2013 and provided information about what the Blake School is currently doing.

Commissioner Seidman stated we should bring to the Council that we will be working on another event for this year related to anti-bullying it will be a new event.

Chair Bigbee asked if the Quasquicentennial is currently on the work plan. City Manager Intern Klugman stated this event is not on the work plan approved by the Council, it will need to be presented to Council and get their approval.

Chair Bigbee also stated we will review and update the Council on our current approved work plan items which include: Anti-Bullying- Edina Reads, Community Outreach related to Census Demographic Changes. The Community Outreach will have two initiatives to explain the working group and the MN Advocates for Human Rights' community listening sessions training. The City of Richfield has reached out to the Commission about training.

Chair Bigbee stated the Commission will also present new ideas and initiatives to be discussed with council, an additional anti-bullying event, youth retreats and the Quasquicentennial event.

B. Domestic Partner Legislation Review

Commissioner Stanton gave an update on domestic partner legislation and stated there are three options right now that may get voted on in the next week or so. Those options include: the legalized marriage bill, a proposal for all new marriages to be civil unions for all couples regardless of sexual orientation and the bill the HRRC recommended to Council about local jurisdictions having the ability to define dependents for their own jurisdictions.

C. Quasquicentennial

City Manager Intern Klugman explained to the Commission the Quasquicentennial is not currently on the commission's work plan. Since the HRRC bylaws outline a press release is needed for the implementation of a new working group we need to get permission from the council to work on the project.

Commissioner Lagerstrom shared if they give permission we will be putting out a press release for the working group.

Chair Bigbee shared that we have talked to a few people who signed up to be on the Human Rights and Relations Commission who were not selected to see if they have any interest in being on a working group. So far, four of them have expressed interest.

Commissioner Winnick made a motion to approve the formation of the working group for the Quasquicentennial with the condition the Council gives permission at the joint work session and to give Leslie permission to work with staff to draft a press release for the working group. Commissioner Kingston seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick.
Motion carried.

D. General Work Plan updates

- i. Monitor Domestic Partner Legislation and the City Ordinance.

Commissioner Stanton shared the Council did amend the City Ordinance to include Gender Expression.

ii. Community Outreach Efforts- no updates.

iii. Anti-bullying event and education- Edina Reads

City Manager Intern Klugman shared that the Communication and Technology services department is planning to finish up the video of the Edina Reads event this week. The video will play on channel 16 until May 26 on Tuesdays at 11 pm, Wednesdays 7 am and 3 pm.

Commissioner Davis asked if the video will be available on the website.

Staff Liaison Schaefer responded that we will look into it.

iv. Tom Oye Award

Commissioner Winnick shared the Tom Oye Award presentation will be at 5 pm on April 30 at the volunteer recognition reception.

v. Days of Remembrance

Commissioner Seidman shared they are currently working with the JCRC to find a speaker for next year's Day of Remembrance. This year, the posters were put up in the lobby and the videos are playing on channel 16. Commissioner Seidman mentioned the Commission has only reused the information for the last two years and has not spent additional funds.

Commissioner Kingston shared we still have the books, videos and handouts available from the last two years for future events.

vi. Domestic Violence

Commissioner Kingston shared when this was put on the work plan it was an idea from a commissioner and has not been started. She asked if this is an item the commission wants to continue to explore or if the commission wants to table the item and find out from the community what is actually needed. Since the work hasn't started.

Commissioner Stanton shared through the human services task force, we are already currently funding this and we get a copy of their statistics. As a commission, he feels we need to be a little more focused and that others are better suited to work on this issue.

Commissioner Davis stated her agreement with Commissioner Stanton's comment.

Commissioner Kingston asked about contacting the partners that the City is already funding to get an update.

Chair Bigbee asked if this is a priority or if the HRRC should remove it from the work plan.

Commissioner Kingston made a motion to remove Domestic Violence from the 2013 work plan, Commissioner Winnick seconded the motion.

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick.

Motion carried.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

There was none.

VIII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

Commissioner Winnick explained we have to appoint a member to serve on the Edina Community Council. Commissioner Winnick has served for the past two years, if anyone is interested in serving.

Chair Bigbee asked if by June Commissioner could have their nominations selected.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

Staff Liaison Schaefer reminded the Commission to register for the April 30 Volunteer Reception.

City Manager Intern Klugman passed out an email from former Commissioner Meg Newell, saying goodbye and giving an update about the Charity Woods contact.

X. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business on the Commission Agenda, **Commissioner Davis moved and Commissioner Kingston seconded adjournment of the meeting.**

Ayes: Bigbee, Cashmore, Davis, Kingston, Lagerstrom, Seidman, Stanton and Winnick.
Motion carried.

Chair Bigbee declared the meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Minutes approved by HRRC, May 28, 2013

Ari Klugman, City Manager Intern

Arnie Bigbee, HRRC Chair